

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

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<b>JOHN DOE,</b>	:	
	:	
<b>Plaintiff,</b>	:	
	:	
<b>v.</b>	:	<b>CIVIL ACTION</b>
	:	<b>No. 23-1347</b>
	:	
<b>HEUBACH LTD et al.,</b>	:	
	:	
<b>Defendants.</b>	:	

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**ORDER**

This 10<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2023, upon consideration of Plaintiff’s Motion to Proceed Anonymously, ECF 2, it is hereby **ORDERED** as follows:

1. Plaintiff’s Motion is **GRANTED**, subject to reconsideration upon any future opposition by Defendant. Plaintiff may proceed as “John Doe,” and shall be referred to as “John Doe” on the docket and in all future papers filed in this litigation; where necessary, Plaintiff’s name shall be redacted. Plaintiff may also redact his address from the Complaint and any future filings.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Parties to a lawsuit typically must identify themselves. Fed. R. Civ. P. 10(a). However, parties may proceed anonymously in exceptional cases. *Doe v. Megless*, 654 F.3d 404, 408 (3d Cir. 2011). To proceed anonymously, “a plaintiff must show ‘both (1) a fear of severe harm, and (2) that the fear of severe harm is reasonable.’” *Id.* (quoting *Doe v. Kamehameha Sch./Pauali Bishop Est.*, 596 F.3d 1036, 1043 (9th Cir. 2010)). Courts must also assess an array of factors that “balance a plaintiff’s interest and fear against the public’s strong interest in an open litigation process.” *See Megless*, 654 F.3d at 408-09 (describing non-comprehensive list of relevant factors).

Applying the *Megless* factors, the Court finds that Plaintiff is entitled to proceed under a pseudonym. Plaintiff’s identity has seemingly been kept confidential thus far; Plaintiff has demonstrated a legitimate fear of future harm if his name is associated with this lawsuit given that his family, friends, and religious community are not accepting of the LGBTQ community, ECF 3; there is a public interest in maintaining the confidentiality of the parties in such a sensitive matter involving purely legal issues; and nothing suggests that Plaintiff has an improper motive in proceeding anonymously.

2. Plaintiff shall provide his actual name to the Court by filing a notice under seal by **April 14, 2023**.
3. Plaintiff's actual name shall be available to the attorneys of record in this litigation.

/s/ Gerald Austin McHugh  
United States District Judge